

Land Use

Introduction

The Land Use element describes the distribution of existing land uses and the potential for future land development and is the chapter of the Plan with which citizens are most familiar. It is essential to know how much land is currently used for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and other types of development and how much of the land is undeveloped. While residential densities and use characteristics are generally described in the Land Use element, specific standards such as minimum lot sizes and appropriate uses are, and should continue to be, designated in the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map of the City.

With over 54 percent of its land area in wetlands, the City of Poquoson is comprised almost entirely of soils and other environmentally sensitive features that have some development constraints. A large percentage of the City's land is either part of the 100-year floodplain or floodway. Historically, soils that are unsuitable for onsite septic systems have been the greatest constraint in both development and water quality. As indicated in the Environmental Element, nearly all soils in the City are unsuitable for onsite septic systems. The City recognized the impacts of failing septic systems on both surface and groundwater and is currently in the process of expanding the City's public sewer system to address this issue. Other environmental constraints, such as shrink-swell soils, hydric soils, tidal and non-tidal wetlands, and a high seasonal water table, are adequately addressed through existing City ordinances, including the Environmental Management Area Overlay District, the Wetlands Ordinance, etc. The Future Land Use Plan includes mostly low-density residential development or resource conservation in recognition of the environmental constraints of the City.

Existing Land Use Analysis

An inventory of existing land uses serves several purposes in the development of a Comprehensive Plan. Study of the existing land use pattern will identify factors, which have influenced past development. An analysis will identify conflicts between land uses, will aid in the forecast of future developmental patterns and will provide the basis for a future land use map.

The results of the existing land use analysis ~~is~~ are shown on Table 1, Existing Land Use. Land in the City was classified into eleven categories. Each parcel of land in Poquoson was classified according to its principal land use activity. In instances where a parcel of land had more than one principal use, both uses were identified. Also, parcels larger than two acres with one principal use and a secondary or subordinate use were classified among the appropriate categories. An example would be a large tract, which had a house as well as a sizable woodland or open space area. In this case, an area of one acre would be classified as being used for



residential single-family purposes and the remaining area would be classified under the Agricultural, Woodland or Open Area categories.

Table 1
Existing Land Use
City of Poquoson

	Area in Acres	Percent of Total
<u>Residential</u>		
Single-Family	2,166	21.6%
Multi-Family	47	0.5%
Mobile Home	19	0.2%
<i>Residential Totals</i>	<i>2,232</i>	<i>22.3%</i>
<u>Commercial</u>		
General Commercial	75	0.8%
Waterfront Commercial/Industrial	19	0.1%
<i>Commercial Totals</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>0.9%</i>
Industrial	2	0.1%
Public/Semi-Public	129	1.3%
<u>Vacant</u>		
Agricultural, Woodland, Open Space	1,995	21.1%
Wetlands & Conservation	1,930	19.3%
Federal Lands	3,275	32.8%
<i>Vacant Totals</i>	<i>7,200</i>	<i>72.1%</i>
Roads and Streets	328	3.3%
TOTALS	9,985	100.0%

Summary of Existing Land Uses

There are 9,985 acres in Poquoson including 3,275 acres of Federal land. In 1996, approximately 28% of this acreage was developed for residential, commercial, industrial, public/semi-public or roadway land uses. Undeveloped land accounted for 7,200 acres or approximately 72% of the City's total area. This includes 5,205 acres of wetlands, conservation



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areas and lands owned by the Federal Government. Outlined below is a more detailed description of each land use category.

Residential - This category is comprised of land occupied by single-family, ~~and~~ multi-family residences, and mobile homes. It also includes small woodland and open space areas located upon land used primarily for dwellings. Residential is the principal use of developed land in Poquoson, accounting for 2,232 acres or (22.3%) of the City's land area. Approximately 1% of all developed land is classified as residential.

Almost all of the residential land, 2,166 acres, is developed with single-family detached dwellings that are located in subdivisions scattered throughout the City. There are five multi-family complexes that are located within the City. These complexes contain 440 multi-family units and occupy 47 acres. Most of the multi-family units are in Wythe Creek Apartments, Poquoson Place Townhouses, Towne Villas Townhouses and Bayside Convalescent Home. There are 196 mobile homes occupying nineteen acres. Nearly all of the mobile homes are located in either Carpenter's or Shady Oaks Mobile Home Parks.

Commercial - This category is comprised of land occupied by general commercial or water-related business activities. General commercial includes retail trade and business establishments such as the shopping centers, gas stations, and restaurants. Poquoson has 75 acres of land (0.8%) used for general commercial purposes. Nearly all general commercial land is located along Wythe Creek Road.

Waterfront commercial/industrial uses include marinas, seafood restaurants and seafood processing industries. There are 19 acres (0.1%) used for waterfront uses.

Industrial - This category is comprised of land used for manufacturing and warehousing activities. Poquoson has only one non-waterfront manufacturing establishment, which uses 2 acres of land.

Public/Semi-public - Public land use is comprised of governmental facilities such as parks, schools, the Municipal Building and the Post Office. Semi-public uses are privately owned facilities regularly used by the public. They include the Masonic Hall, churches and cemeteries. Poquoson has 129 acres (1.3%) used for public and semi-public purposes. This includes the City's closed 40-acre landfill.

Roadways - Public and private street right-of-way use includes 328 acres (3.3%) of Poquoson's land.

Agricultural, Woodland or Open Area - This category is comprised of agricultural lands and woodlands, generally five acres or more, and any other vacant or open areas, which could be



built upon. It is this land use category, which generally should be considered available for future development. There are 1,995 acres (21.1%) classified under this category.

Wetlands and Conservation - Wetlands and Conservation areas are the fourth largest land use category in Poquoson. The City has 1,930 acres of wetlands (19.3%). Cow Island and Plum Tree Island National Wildlife Refuge are not included in this total.

Federal Lands -- There are ~~3,275~~ 4,313 acres of ~~Federal~~ federally owned land in Poquoson (~~32.8%~~). This is the largest single land use category. Nearly all of ~~the Federal~~ these lands ~~is~~ are considered wetlands. Plum Tree and Cow Island National Wildlife Refuge occupies ~~most~~ all of Poquoson's Federal land.

Subdivision Platting

The first subdivisions to be platted in the City were comparatively small. Then, beginning in the late 1950's, the size of new subdivisions increased. Between 1960 and 1970, a total of 415 residential building lots were created. This equates to an average of approximately 42 new lots per year. Some of the major subdivisions platted during this period include Poquoson Shores, Lambs Point, Whites Terrace, Bannockburn, Powhatan Place and sections of Westover Shores and Roberts Acres.

Subdivision development expanded greatly during the 1970's, when a total of 939 new lots were created. Some of the major subdivisions platted during this period were Roberts Landing, Bennett Farm Estates, Rivergate, White House Cove, Cedar Landing Estates, Windy Point and Bunting Manor.

Between 1980 and 1990, an average of 63 new lots were platted every year, for a total of 631 newly platted residential lots, Valmoore Estates with 61 lots, and Towne Villas South with 52 townhouse lots. Other subdivisions platted in the 1980's include Page Place, Paradise Point, Valmoore II, Back River Cove and Key Oak Terrace. Poquoson Place Apartments with 158 units were also established during the 1980's.

Between 1991 and 1995, an average of ~~33~~ 29 new lots were platted every year, for a total of ~~167~~ 233 newly platted lots. New subdivisions during this time period include Michelle's Landing, Heritage Cove, Poquoson Meadows, Bennett Creek Point and Key Oak Terrace.

Most of Poquoson's subdivisions are scattered through the western and central parts of the City. This scattered pattern of development has led to extensive expenditures for sewers, water and roads. Therefore, Poquoson should encourage development to occur where sewer lines exist or are soon expected and where existing roads can best accommodate increased traffic.



Building Permit Trends - Building permit records are probably a more accurate measure of residential development than is the platting of subdivisions, since a subdivision plat does not necessarily indicate that construction has occurred. Between 1970 and 1980, 1,121 residential building permits were issued in Poquoson. Residential construction declined somewhat between 1980 and 1990, dropping off to a total of 796 building permits having been issued. Subdivision and building permit activity followed somewhat similar patterns. Both had peaked years of activity in 1973, 1977 and 1983 and both declined considerably during the 1980-82 recession. Building permits and new subdivisions picked up once again in the mid 1990's with a substantial number of building permits issued in 1996 and early 1997.

Commercial Development Trends - Historically commercial uses were also scattered throughout the City. Early commercial uses consisted of rural oriented "general" stores including small grocery stores and gas stations at major crossroads. Waterfront commercial uses were and are still prevalent from earlier days.

Until the late 1970s, the only concentration of commercial uses was located in central Poquoson near the intersection of Poquoson Avenue and Odd Road. This scattered commercial development often resulted in land use conflicts with nearby residential development. Since Poquoson Shopping Center opened in 1980, and Wythe Creek Plaza in 1987, commercial uses began to concentrate along Wythe Creek Road giving Poquoson a new and identifiable commercial center. Commercial uses along Wythe Creek Road have to some degree characterized the area as "strip development".

Between 1993 and late 1996 commercial developments began to increase, again primarily due to improving economic conditions. New commercial development proposals during this time frame include: Claytor Rollins Funeral Home expansion, Advance Auto Parts, Chapel Hill Greens, McDonalds, Langley Federal Credit Union and MOOVIES video rental.

Factors Affecting Land Use in Poquoson

Poquoson's land development pattern has been influenced by several significant factors, including:

Geography - Poquoson's location on a peninsula with its many necks of land and inlets of the Chesapeake Bay has determined its land development pattern. The land on many of these necks has been developed for homesites because of the desirability of waterfront locations.

Physical Constraints

There are several physical environmental constraints to development such as hydric soils, a high water table, the shrink/swell potential of the soil, soils with low permeability, RPA and RMA



restrictions, and Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Constraints. Table 2 of the Environmental Element of the Comprehensive Plan, provides a breakdown of the soils in Poquoson and their suitability for certain uses. More on physical constraints to development is discussed in the Environmental Element of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as in the physical constraints to development section in the Land Use Element of this plan.

Roadways - The proximity to the City's roadway system has also influenced land use patterns in Poquoson. There are ~~five~~ seven principal roads in Poquoson - Wythe Creek Road, Little Florida Road/Victory Boulevard, Yorktown Road, Hunts Neck Road Browns Neck Road, Rens Road and Poquoson Avenue. All other roads in the City branch off from these roadways into the various "necks" of the City. Land development patterns have tended to followed this roadway system.

Wetlands - Development has been limited by the vast amount of tidal and non-tidal wetlands. Federal, state and local regulations require the preservation of many types of wetlands, which have affected development within much of the City. These regulations have and will continue to affect development within much of the City. The physical constraints posed by the wetlands have also affected development in the City of Poquoson as stated previously.

Utilities - The availability of public sewers has also affected land development patterns. Soils in the City are not suitable for septic tanks. Because of this, the City requires that unsewered lots must be at least two acres and have a minimum separation of 18-inches between drainfields and the seasonal water table. Also, for lands lying in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas, new home sites that are not served by public sewer must also have a reserve drainfield. The Health Department has placed a septic tank permit moratorium in the Hunts Neck area in all of Poquoson. These actions This will have severely limited development in unsewered areas. However, this scenario will change dramatically by September 2001 when public sanitary sewer will be available to all areas of Poquoson.

Location in Metropolitan Area - Poquoson is within easy commuting distance of the major employment and cultural centers in the metropolitan area, making it a desirable bedroom community. Consequently, much of Poquoson's development has been residential in character.

Development Regulations - While it is the Comprehensive Plan that identifies the general direction and character development is to take in the City, it is Poquoson's land use and development regulations, i.e. the Zoning, Subdivision and Site Plan Ordinances, along with the newly adopted Environmental and Flood Plain Overlay Districts that specify how and with what public interest improvements to a particular parcel of land is to be developed. Consequently, the enforcement of the City's land use and development regulations plays an important role in guiding future development.



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Development Patterns - To a large extent, future development is guided by what already exists. Being principally a residential bedroom community to the greater peninsula area, most of Poquoson's development has traditionally been residential. This is illustrated by the fact that of all the land in Poquoson that has already been developed, 81% has been developed with homes. Commercial and industrial development has been limited and has only recently begun to ~~grow~~ expand.

Existing Zoning - There are four residential zoning classifications, four commercial ~~classifications~~ and one ~~light industrial research and development~~ zoning classification. The predominant zoning classifications, representing approximately 72% of the City's developable land, ~~are~~ is dedicated for detached single-family residential development. ~~The 5~~ Five commercial and light industrial zoning classifications make up only approximately 9% of the City.

A summary of the zoning classifications in the City of Poquoson ~~are~~ is as follows:

Residential

- R-S: Detached Single Family - 26,700 square feet minimum lot size.
- R-1: Detached Single Family - 20,000 square feet minimum lot size.
- R-2: Detached Single Family - 18,000 square feet minimum lot size.
- R-3: Attached Multi-Family - Apartments and Town Houses.

Commercial

- B-1: Office Professional - No minimum lot size is required.
- B-2: Retail Commercial - No minimum lot size is required.
- G-C: General Commercial - No minimum lot size is required.
- V-C: Mixed-use specialty retail, office, limited multifamily - No minimum lot size is required.
- R&D: Research and Development, Office Park - 3 ½-acre minimum lot size.

Conservation

- C-1: Agriculture and Silviculture with restricted detached single family.

All ten (10) of these districts are governed with three (3) overlay districts. These are as follows:

1. Environmental Management Area Overlay District
2. Flood Plain Management Overlay District
3. Architectural Review District

The Table 2 below depicts the area in each zoning district.



Table 2 - Land Use Zoning By Acreage

	Area in Acres	% of Total
<u>Residential</u>	4,832	72%
R-S	1,387	20.6%
R-1	1,923	28.6%
R-2	1,472	21.9%
R-3	50	0.8%
<u>Commercial</u>	454	6.7%
B-1	27	0.4%
B-2	187	2.7%
G-C	60	0.9%
V-C	60	0.9%
R&D	120	1.7%
Conservation	1,424	18.8%
Totals	6,710*	100%

*Does not include Federal lands.

Vacant Land - Finally, the availability and zoning classification of vacant land also plays an important role in guiding future development. As was mentioned in the existing land use section noted earlier, of the 7,200 acres of vacant land in the City, 5,205 are not immediately available for development because they are Federal lands, wetlands or conservation areas. This leaves approximately 2,000 acres or 21% of the City's land area available for development. Of these 2,000 acres, nearly 81% is are zoned for residential development.

Public Comment

Citizens who attended the public input sessions and those who responded to the citizens input survey provided the following comments regarding land use:

- Most people are willing to support a variety of commercial, light industrial and single-family residential land uses.
- Need more and better landscaping within public areas and as part of commercial developments.



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- Keep housing lots large.
- Support for Big Woods zoning districts and master planning.
- Limit or discourage unplanned multi-family developments.
- Preserve more wooded areas, green space and open areas.
- Strong support for property maintenance code.
- Citizens strongly supported good land use planning in order to avoid "Commercial Strip" syndrome.
- Most citizens supported additional landscaping, sign and architectural standards for new land use developments.
- Public input participants identified good land use planning, encouraging quality commercial developments and controlled growth as one of their highest priorities for the future of Poquoson.

Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan delineates areas best suited for residential, commercial, industrial and public/semi-public land uses as well as areas which should not be developed. The suggested land use arrangement is based upon the recommendations and guidelines from the background analyses and goals, objectives and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Plan is based upon the following assumptions:

- Poquoson's future growth will be largely determined by the economic growth on the Peninsula, which is expected to improve at a slow yet cyclical rate.
- Poquoson has the necessary things in place to continue to be one of the more desirable places to live on the Peninsula with competitive taxes, ~~good~~ excellent schools, waterfront and an attractive rural residential atmosphere. These features ~~which~~ attract development primarily for moderate to upper income households seeking low density, single-family homes. It is recognized that future appropriate and prudent governmental decisions will have to be made to continue this attractiveness.



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- Poquoson will continue to be primarily a City of single-family homes with medium to low densities, complimented by small, but well planned moderate density residential developments.

Ten land use categories are shown on the attached Future Land Use Plan Map.

Land Use Map Categories:

Low Density Residential - The low-density residential category features single-family residential development ~~having that has~~ a maximum of 1.5 to 2 dwelling units per acre. Low density is proposed for all parts of the City not designated for commercial, conservation or multi-family development.

Multi-Family Residential - Multi-Family residential development currently allowing a maximum density of eight dwelling units per acre is allowed ~~for in~~ these areas. High-density development generates high demand for public services and should be located adjacent to arterial roads. High-density development is located west of Wythe Creek Road, south of Yorktown Road. Virtually all of the areas currently designated for multi-family residential have been developed with mobile-home parks, apartments or townhouses.

General Commercial - The General Commercial District is intended to serve retail service needs for Poquoson. They include commercial activities, which require proximity to major streets for visibility and accessibility. Permitted uses include professional offices, shopping centers, retail sales and certain public/semi-public facilities such as government offices, social meeting halls and churches. Unlike the Village Commercial District, the General Commercial category is needed to accommodate high traffic generating uses such as automobile sales, service stations, and fast food or drive-in restaurants. The General Commercial District is designated for both sides of Wythe Creek Road from roughly Wainwright Drive south to just south of the Oxford Run drainage ditch. Sixty acres of land in the Big Woods behind the Food Lion Shopping Center ~~is are~~ also designated for General Commercial. Significant infrastructure improvements will be necessary for the development of this area. Efforts should be made to confine general retail type uses with the proposed General Commercial areas. In addition, the General Commercial areas should be developed with attention to street access, signs, screening and buffers including landscaping and green area to promote a more attractive appearance and design.

Limited Business - The Limited Business district is intended to serve small scale low intensity commercial uses that would be more compatible with adjacent residential uses than General Commercial types uses which are more intense. Suggested uses include professional offices, medical offices, branch banks, small service establishments, day care centers, churches, small restaurants and small public facilities. Small-scale general retail uses with a Conditional Use Permit could also be considered as part of this District. The Limited Commercial District is



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designated for the Wythe Creek Road/Cary's Chapel Road intersection area. As Wythe Creek Road is widened in areas from its 2-lane configuration, additional portions of Wythe Creek Road may be considered for *limited* retail use. These additional areas should be chosen carefully to minimize conflicts with established residential neighborhoods and at the same time retain an identifiable commercial core area.

Village Commercial - The Village Commercial District is intended to encourage the establishment of a village center by permitting a variety of commercial, office and limited residential uses businesses in order to create a center of business and economic activity consistent with the advantage and prominence of a location inherent in the Big Woods. The ordinance is designed to promote the development of a more intimate and traditional "village" type commercial development. Some of the major components of this district will include the following:

- No minimum lot size.
- Zero-lot line development
- On-street parking with major-shared parking lots located behind buildings.
- Shared stormwater facilities
- Uniform streetscape with benches, streetlights, landscaping etc.
- Underground utilities.
- Uniform sign standards.
- Bikeways and sidewalks.
- Roadway access from collector and sub-collector thoroughfares.

Permitted uses in ~~this~~ the Village Commercial District would be as follows:

Retail Specialty Shops - sales of gifts, antiques, flowers, books, jewelry, wearing apparel, tobacco and related supplies, or craft shops.

Personal Service Shops - real estate sales, travel agency, brokerage firms, employment counseling, insurance sales, advertising, mailing and stenographic service.

Studios - studios for dance, art, music, photography, radio or television.



Professional Offices - offices for lawyers, engineers, architects, accountants, doctors, dentists, and chiropractors.

Eateries - restaurants, bakeries, confectioneries, coffee houses, cafes, bars, deli's, restaurants without drive-through facilities.

~~*Residential* - apartments as secondary uses to primary commercial and office buildings on the second floor.~~

Public - community recreational facilities, libraries and government offices.

Research and Development - This district is intended to encourage the development of light industrial and office park uses. Development in this District will be intended to be similar in character to that ~~is in~~ the Hampton Roads Center in the City of Hampton. Permitted uses will include professional offices, laboratories and light industrial and manufacturing uses. Hotels, restaurants and conference centers will be allowed as secondary uses.

Some of the major components of ~~this~~ the Research and Development district will include the following:

- Encourage office and industrial park land uses that incorporate open space and landscaping to create a "campus-like" appearance, atmosphere and character.
- The minimum area of any tract, or combination of tracts proposed for development in the district will be 3 ½ acres.
- Roadway access shall only be from collector and sub-collector thoroughfares.
- A minimum 75-foot buffer area along the right-of-way of Victory Boulevard.
- Shared stormwater management facilities.
- Shared parking areas.
- Fifty-foot landscaped buffer areas adjacent to any adjoining residential zoning district boundaries.
- Shared entrances will be encouraged to minimize traffic hazards and congestion.



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Areas designated for Research and Development include approximately 200 acres in the western portion of the Big Woods area on both the north and south sides of Victory Boulevard. The Research and Development designation should also be considered a “holding zone” that prevents the use of land along Victory Boulevard for strip commercial developments.

Waterfront Commercial - These areas are for businesses that benefit the seafood industry or require access to the water. Permitted uses include seafood restaurants, seafood retail shops, seafood processing businesses, marinas, and boat repair and service businesses. Waterfront Commercial is designated for the lands around Messick Point.

Waterfront Mixed-Use - Waterfront Mixed-Use includes all those uses permitted in the Waterfront Commercial District and also the addition of townhouses and condominiums. Waterfront Mixed Use is designated for the ~~end-terminus~~ of Rens Road, ~~the end of~~ the west side of Brown’s Neck Road, and lands around Messick Point. It is strongly recommended that these areas be developed with a master plan in order to take full advantage of this rare waterfront property.

Public Semi-Public - Public and semi-public uses include schools, government offices, parks and cemeteries.

Resource Conservation - Resource Conservation Areas are designated to protect wetlands, beaches, shorelines and other environmentally sensitive lands in Poquoson.

Ultimate Population

For residential land use planning purposes, it is helpful to forecast the City’s ultimate population, that is the population that would be attained if all the existing residentially zones land were developed. By projecting the ultimate population, it is possible to forecast long-term land use, transportation and facilities demands.

Based upon the existing zoning densities and the future Land Use Plan, Poquoson should have an ultimate future population of 19,600, based upon an assumed average household size of 2.6 persons. The ultimate population is not projected for a given year because it is not dependent upon a predetermined growth rate. Instead, it is predicted on the proposition that the City’s population will stop-~~cease~~ growing when the supply of residentially zoned land is exhausted. The ultimate population estimate assumes that sewers will be available throughout the City and that no development of wetlands will occur.

The ultimate population may also be compared to the population projections given in the Population Element of this plan. This comparison shows that Poquoson’s year 2015 population



of 15,000 is about 70% of the ultimate population of 19,600. This indicates that Poquoson's population will continue to grow well into the 21st century and that there is adequate residentially zoned land for the planning period.

Secondary Growth

Background

In late 1998, the City began a sanitary sewer expansion program to all areas of the community that would eliminate all septic tank operations in the City of Poquoson by 2005.

This has involved the installation of sanitary sewer lines combining both force mains with gravity lines, supplemented with grinder pumps in eleven (11) areas of the City.

Along with the sanitary sewer expansion program came some concerns expressed not only from many local citizens, but also from the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department (CBLAD).

One major concern, expressed by all parties, was that of the City's secondary building growth that is anticipated to occur as a result of the expansion program. Specifically cited were the effects on certain environmental constraints, including wetlands, marshes, the water tables, soils, and most notably the Chesapeake Bay itself.

Constraints Assessment

The City of Poquoson is faced with the challenge of accommodating growth within the City while at the same time ensuring the protection of the natural resources in and around Poquoson. The previously identified physical constraints to development (see Environmental Element) are now considered in both the long-range land use planning and the day-to-day development activities of the City.

As part of its ongoing Phase II monitoring process of the CBPA compliance program, the City will use the physical constraints information to determine where new development and redevelopment should be encouraged to promote land use that is environmentally compatible with the surrounding environment. This occurs, in part, through the characterization of land in Poquoson as having minimal environmental sensitivity, moderate sensitivity, or high sensitivity. The information in Table 3 (Ecological Sensitivity) will be supplemented by further Phase II work and will be used for making the determinations. It is the intent of the City to use the assessment to focus development away from highly environmentally sensitive areas to the maximum extent practicable. The information was evaluated to determine what changes should



be made to local building codes, zoning ordinances, and land use regulations to further protect environmentally constrained lands.

Based on the review of the physical constraints analysis, areas within the City are characterized as having three (3) sensitivity areas. These are: Minimal Environmental Sensitivity, Moderate environmental Sensitivity, and high Environmental sensitivity. Using this assessment of parcels throughout Poquoson, the City will focus development away from highly environmentally sensitive areas. This will be accomplished through strict construction standards, the Environmental Management Overlay District, and other changes as determined necessary from time to time based on a continual ecological assessment of the City.

Table 3 ECOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

<u>Some Sensitivity</u>	<u>Moderate Sensitivity</u>	<u>High Sensitivity</u>
<u>No Shrink/Swell soils found on-site</u>	<u>Shrink/Swell soils found on-site</u>	<u>Shrink/Swell soils found on-site</u>
<u>No Hydric Soils / Wetlands</u>	<u>Hydric Soils / Non-Tidal Headwaters / Isolated Wetlands</u>	<u>Hydric Soils / Tidal or Adjacent Non-Tidal Wetlands</u>
<u>No RPA features found on-site</u>	<u>No RPA features but portion of an RPA buffer on-site</u>	<u>RPA feature(s) and buffer on-site</u>
<u>Adequate Road Capacity for Development (A Zone)</u>	<u>Inadequate Road Capacity for Development (B-C Zones)</u>	<u>Severe Road Capacity for Development (D-E Zones)</u>
<u>500 Year Flood Zone</u>	<u>100 Year Flood Zone</u>	<u>100 Year with Velocity Flood Zone</u>

Adequacy of Existing City Regulations and Practices

At the present time, the City of Poquoson has in place seven (7) adopted environmentally oriented ordinances to which citizens and developers alike must comply with in order to provide for the overall protection of the community's sensitive environment. Specifically, these ordinances and the time of adoption are as follows:

- Zoning Ordinance - adopted 9/14/1981
- Subdivision Ordinance - adopted 10/12/1981
- Site Plan Ordinance - adopted 10/12/1981



- Erosion/Sediment Control Ordinance - adopted 12/12/1982
- Wetlands Ordinance - adopted 2/28/1993
- Poquoson Master Drainage Plan - endorsed 7/1992
- Environmental Management Area Overlay District – adopted 12/13/1999

Secondary Growth

Secondary development as a result of the sewer extension project was generated from two (2) land sources. They are:

- platted lots of record predating the Zoning, Subdivision and 1989 Chesapeake Bay Ordinance which have remained undeveloped because of unsuitable soils for septic systems, and
- lots resulting from newly created subdivision from existing large tracts of land previously not available to sanitary sewer.

Table 4 presents a profile of the build out that may reasonably be expected to occur in each of the eleven (11) sewer expansion areas. The potential number of new lots was determined by taking any given parcel in excess of 2.5 acres, after deducting acreage containing natural constraints (i.e. marsh, wetlands, RPA, etc.), and then applying the minimum lot area square footage required for that zoning district (R-S, R-1, R-2). In turn, the staff applied the three (3) methods of subdivision, as provided for in the Subdivision Ordinance, to determine the possible number of lots that could be generated in each area. The land area included previously platted lots of record, with lots in excess of two and one-half (2.5) acres, and larger tracts that could possibly be assembled for a conventional subdivision development.

As can be seen from Table 4, it is anticipated that a potential 1,700 new lots could be generated over an identifiable period of time. Specifically, seven hundred and fifty (750) could occur in the new sewer expansion area while nine hundred and fifty (950) could result in areas currently available to existing sewers. However, any number of incidents could affect the timeframe of this expansion such as the national and local economy, employment generators, and building market trends.

Presently, the City's emphasis with regard to Commercial and Research and Development, has been to curb "strip development" along Wythe Creek Road and force a more centralized commercial core area in the Big Woods within close proximity of the intersection of Little Florida Road, Wythe Creek Road, and Victory Boulevard.

Likewise, the seafood industry and associated marine waterfront mixed development, is anticipated to occur at Messick Point. This is approximately twelve (12) acres of property owned by the City for which a Master Plan has been developed. In addition, approximately



twenty (20) acres of privately owned property located at the end of Browns Neck Point may become available for mixed use development in the future.

Residential development is anticipated to continue in the western portion of the City with lot requirements of 26,700 square feet. No multi-family developments will occur since there is no developable land area identified as moderate density in the City.

Each of the development categories anticipated includes certain development constraints. In the Big Woods such constraints will be in the form of scattered wetlands. Messick Point constraints will be SAV, RPA, and shoreline dredging. The B-2 Zone constraints for the twenty (20) acres of private waterfront development will be RPA, wetlands, and impact to water quality involving certain permits required by the Army Corps of Engineers and environmental assessments by DEQ.

Residential development constraints will most likely occur in or near scattered wetlands and will involve certain permits as required by the Army Corps of Engineers, along with environmental assessments and review by the City's Engineering and Planning Departments.

Impervious Surface Impacts

If one considers that all 766 potential new lots opened up to development from the sewer expansion could truly be developed, and it is assumed that a home with a 2,000 square foot footprint is built on each lot, then there would be an increase of 1,532,000 square feet of impervious surface from this development. Ancillary impervious surface from driveways, outbuildings, etc. will vary from lot to lot, but this corresponds to an increase of roughly thirty-five (35) acres of land. This is a modest increase in impervious surface and will not likely have significant effects to the Bay and its tributaries. CBLAD estimates that an impervious surface increase of this magnitude would add approximately 76 pounds of phosphorus to the waterways around Poquoson per year.

Much of this runoff from these structures will be collected by City-owned and maintained stormwater retention facilities. These facilities will be better able to filter out any harmful pollutants from this increased development. Roadways that may need to be constructed, or otherwise altered to accommodate this development, will also have much of their runoff collected and treated by these stormwater treatment facilities. The City feels that the stormwater management program, currently being developed, will keep pace with new development arising from the ongoing sewer expansion throughout the City and that any increases in stormwater runoff will be adequately collected and treated by this system.

Lots of Record



Lots of Record development in all eleven (11) sewer extension areas will be a contributing factor to the secondary impact. The City's position is that existing ordinances and regulations, if effectively enforced, are reasonably sufficient to negate any degradation to the community's natural physical features. Specifically we site the following control requirements.

Current regulations require that any new residential development on existing lots of record that do not have access to sewer must occur on at least two (2) acres of land to provide for both a primary and reserve septic drainfield regardless of the underlying zoning which may accommodate lots of 26,700 square feet (R-S), 20,000 square feet (R-1), or 18,000 square feet (R-2).

At the present time, the City's Zoning Ordinance is current with State Code and relevant zoning laws and practices. In terms of drainage control, the Zoning Ordinance must control individual lot on-site stormwater drainage. The City's Zoning Ordinance limits any lot individual development to 30 percent (30%) impervious surface coverage. The Building Department has determined that the current typical average lot coverage averages in between 16% and 20% of impervious surface. This is attributed in part to the large lot size requirements of the zoning ordinance combined with 30 foot and 40 foot front and rear yard setback requirements, respectively. The lot size requirements are 26,700sq.ft. RS District, 20,000sq.ft. R-1 District, and 18,000sq.ft. R-2 District. In addition, the following Code requirements must be met:

- The City's Building Code requires a detailed plot plan as well as an on-site visit to any recorded lot of record.
- Exceptions or exemptions for lots platted before October 1980 allow disturbance only in the landward 50 feet of the RPA buffer. This disturbance is generally limited to the building footprint and must be accompanied with appropriate on-site mitigation.
- Land disturbance in an RPA buffer requires on-site mitigation with the planting of shrubbery and tree replacement at a ratio of 3 to 1.

Potential New Subdivision

In addition to lots of record, another contributing factor to the secondary growth scenario is anticipated to be the new subdivision and subsequent development of existing large parcels or the assembly of smaller vacant parcels into relatively large tracts for re-subdivision.

It appears that much of the concern regarding the sewer expansion program is that such expansion will contribute to the accelerated growth by opening up large tracts of vacant land to residential development. This concern is somewhat misplaced, as there already exists any number of acres of vacant land currently available to sewer connections that have not been



subdivided or otherwise developed. One possible reason for this may be the flat topography and low elevation of Poquoson. Also a number of natural and physical development constraints exist in the form of tidal and non-tidal wetlands, Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas, or natural drainage features that a potential developer must address in order to meet the City's Subdivision Ordinance and Environmental Management Area Overlay District.

Stormwater Runoff

An implication of this development, as with any development, is that of increased runoff from impervious surfaces such as roofs, roadways, and parking lots. Existing stormwater control measures throughout Poquoson consist of a network of ditches that quickly carry off runoff and deposit it into the tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. Scientific knowledge has increased over the past several decades and this practice of stormwater management is now being replaced with other methods of collecting and discharging runoff. Many localities have begun to use regional stormwater collection and treatment facilities instead of smaller ones associated with each new development. The idea behind this shift is that stormwater control and treatment structures owned by a municipality will be better cared for in perpetuity than those controlled by a neighborhood association or retail complex.

The City's Master Drainage Plan has been used as a road map for development in the City, in that it identifies the overall drainage system as well as proposed upgrades to the overall system. The original Master Drainage Plan was completed in 1975, and did not include the entire City. Subsequently, a grant was received from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 1991/92 by which the Master Drainage Plan was updated.

The revised City Master Drainage Plan, completed in July of 1992, shows all drainage structures and features within the City and identifies fifteen (15) areas within the City that have or have had serious drainage deficiencies that were not noted in the 1975 Plan. Pipe sizes, inlet structure types, and associated costs to correct these deficiencies are also provided in the current Plan. The 1992 Master Drainage Plan does not address the Big Woods drainage requirements since a special Stormwater Drainage Study was prepared in 1986 for the Big Woods Development Area. This study was updated in July of 1997 and, therefore, provided the Big Woods with its own drainage study and overall stormwater plan.

The NOAA grant stipulated that the City was to evaluate its stormwater study to determine what areas of the plan could be strengthened. Recommended changes included the consolidation of all drainage requirements into one new chapter of the City Code. This new drainage chapter would include minimum design standards, prohibit the discharge of stormwater into the drainage system, establish policy for the piping of existing ditches and set up procedures for the establishment of drainage districts. Improvements in drainage districts would only be undertaken if a certain percentage of residents within a watershed petitioned the City. If created,



a mechanism would be established to assess charges for the cost of improvements to be borne by all residents in the district. These recommendations were never acted upon. In the near future, it is proposed that this plan will be recommended for consideration by City Council.

Poquoson, along with other Hampton Roads jurisdictions, has received the State Stormwater Management Manual prepared by the State. Upon receipt and review of the documents, and cross-referencing with other ordinances, the City is put in a position where it can request that the City Council formally act on both the Performance and Technical Criteria Sections of the manual. Some minor modifications may be necessary to reflect the Master Drainage and Stormwater Plan findings and needs.

The City of Poquoson Master Drainage Plan provides recommendations and guidelines for the storm drainage systems of the 15 watersheds in the City. As previously stated, the Big Woods Drainage Study, prepared in 1997, is more comprehensive in terms of both water quality and quantity, but is limited to the Big Woods watershed area of the City. The Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance is operative at the present time, along with the creation of a new overlay district, the Environmental Management Area Overlay District. The City of Poquoson plans to adopt a comprehensive Storm Water Management Ordinance in accord with the Virginia Stormwater Management Regulations and Guidelines. The foregoing referenced studies and ordinances form a basic framework for a Stormwater Management Plan for the City of Poquoson. Through an immediate pro-active program of accurate application and enforcement of the current ordinances, and the development and adoption of a new comprehensive stormwater management system, State waters will be protected from stormwater-contaminated runoff from anticipated new development.

The City's Engineering Department has laid the preliminary groundwork for the City's Stormwater Management Program based on the 1985 Master Drainage Plan and the 1997 Big Woods Drainage and Stormwater Plan.

In summary, the current City of Poquoson storm drainage management program is comprised of the City of Poquoson Master Drainage Plan, the Big Woods Drainage and Stormwater Plan, the Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control Ordinance, and the Environmental Management Area Overlay District. These ordinances are incorporated by reference in all other related City ordinances. (See the Environmental Element for further discussion on Stormwater Management).

Transportation Impact

Transportation facilities have a dramatic impact on the quality of life in a community as well its ability to develop. The vast majorities of roadways in Poquoson serve residential subdivisions and have low traffic volumes. Most of the major collector streets in Poquoson such as Wythe Creek Road, Poquoson Avenue, Little Florida Road, and others have increasing traffic volumes.



Because these roads were constructed decades ago, they are inadequate to handle present and future traffic loads. Many roadways include narrow travel lanes, have deep roadside drainage ditches, irregular intersections and do not have adequate turn lanes. The City of Poquoson, as of June 1999, contained approximately 60 miles of roadways with varying traffic volumes ranging from a low of 353 vehicles per day on Poquoson Avenue to a high of 15,316 vehicles per day on Wythe Creek Road. Historic traffic counts reveal that some roadways have increased annually by as much as 5.5 percent over the past nine (9) years.

One of the more significant numbers is the increase in vehicular trips per day upon several of Poquoson's road segments. Specifically, lower Poquoson Avenue below its intersection of Little Florida Road currently carries 9,400 trips per day, which would ultimately increase by approximately 2,650 trips per day, bringing the total to 12,050 trips per day. This increase could significantly reduce the level of service to both Poquoson Avenue and Little Florida Road. Trips on upper Poquoson Avenue between Little Florida Road and Wythe Creek will increase by 1,500 vehicles. Hunts Neck Road from Bayside Drive to Browns Neck Road could expect an increase of 6,400 vehicles per day with the significant increase from Pasture Road itself which would generate an additional 1,550 vehicles per day, bringing this road to a projected total of 2,600 vehicles per day. Although these are significant increases with respect to road capacities, the City's Comprehensive Plan recommends each of the roadways discussed be upgraded within the time frame of the next five years. The City currently has the appropriate right-of-way to widen and improve the roads as needed.

Figure #1 and Table #5 show Poquoson's existing road networks with the existing and projected traffic counts along with the LOS classification for the road. Presently, the City has four (4) of the stated five (5) urban road classifications, which are as follows:

Minor Arterial

These highways interconnect and supplement the principle arterial system with a greater emphasis on land access and a lower level of traffic mobility. They provide intercommunity services, as well as connecting rural collectors to the urban highway system. Examples of minor arterial roads include Victory Boulevard, Little Florida Road, and sections of Wythe Creek Road and Poquoson Avenue.

Urban Collector

These highways provide land access service and traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas. They collect local traffic and distribute it to the arterial system. Examples of urban collector roads include Messick Road, Yorktown Road, Hunts Neck Road, and sections of Wythe Creek Road and Poquoson Avenue.



Local Access

These streets provide direct access to adjacent land and provide access to higher systems. Service to through traffic is discouraged. Examples of local access roads include Rens Road, Pasture Road, and Emmaus Road, as well as those public roads serving residential subdivisions.

Access

These streets are built to State standards and serve as neighborhood collectors providing linkage to local access streets. Examples of the streets are Dryden Drive, Laydon Way, Edwards Road, River Road, etc.

The 1996 Level of Service and Transportation Improvement Study developed by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission found serious problems with the roadways in Poquoson. Approximately ninety-five percent (95%) of the roads in Poquoson, many of which are classified as minor arterial, have vehicle per day (VPD) level of service (LOS) of C, D, E and F with E and F being unacceptable categories. This situation in itself presents the City with several financial and physical problems.

Development Standards

Development standards are intended to provide a guide to accommodating land uses in a manner harmonious with the natural and man-made environment. These standards are further intended to provide a basic framework for evaluating proposals for rezoning, special use permits, site plans, subdivisions, and other reviews in conjunction with applicable ordinance provisions. General standards applicable to most development projects are presented in the first section. Subsequent sections present standards for specific land uses. Development proposals should also conform to other elements of the Comprehensive Plan as well as other City ordinances and policies.

General Land Use Standards

1. Permit new development only where such developments are compatible with the character of adjoining uses or where the impacts of such new developments can be adequately addressed. Particular attention should be given to addressing such impacts as incompatible development intensity, building height and scale, land uses, smoke, noise, dust, odor, vibration, light, and traffic. Issue permit only after any potential environmental constraints to development such as wetlands, RPA, and soils with a high shrink/swell potential have been identified, mapped, and confirmed as correct by the agency with regulatory authority for such areas.



2. Permit the location of new uses only where public services, utilities and facilities are adequate to support such uses. The need for public services (police, fire, education, recreation, etc.) and facilities generated by a development should be met by that development. Means to address public service needs include proffers involving cash, construction, project phasing, uses, density, intensity, dedication, facility construction, cost sharing, and other items.
3. Preserve the natural and wooded character of the City. Particular attention should be given to locating structures and uses outside of sensitive areas; maintaining existing topography, vegetation, trees and tree lines to the maximum extent possible, especially along roads and between uses; encouraging enhanced landscaping of developments located in open fields; locating new roads so that they follow existing contours and old roadway corridors whenever feasible; limiting the height of structures to an elevation below the height of surrounding mature trees whenever possible; minimizing the number of street and driveway intersections by providing common driveways and interconnection of developments; and utilizing light only where necessary and in a manner that eliminates glare and brightness.
4. Site non-agricultural/non-forestal uses in areas designated "Rural Lands" away from agricultural/forestal uses, away from open fields and away from important agricultural/forestal soils and resources. Likewise, sufficiently screen these uses to preserve open spaces and minimize visual impact from public roads. Encourage the preservation of existing agricultural structures such as barns and silos, where feasible.
5. Protect land designated as conservation areas on development plans by perpetual conservation easement held jointly by the City of Poquoson and a qualifying second party or dedicated to a land trust.
6. ~~Protect environmentally sensitive resources~~ that are environmentally sensitive, such as steep slopes, historic and archaeological resources, designated greenways, wetlands, water supply tributaries and impoundments, wildlife habitat, and other sensitive resources by locating conflicting uses away from such resources and utilizing design features, including building and site design, buffers and screening to adequately protect the resource.
7. Minimize the impact of development proposals on major roads by limiting access points and providing side street access and joint entrances. Provide for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to adjacent properties and developments in order to minimize such impacts and to provide adequate access among residential and nonresidential activity centers and among residential neighborhoods. Include bikeways and/or pedestrian facilities within major developments.



8. Provide for ultimate future road widening needs and new road locations through the reservation of adequate right-of-way, and by designing and constructing roads and utilities in a manner that accommodates future road improvements. Require facilities to support bus and transit services in tourist areas and at transit dependent uses.
9. Require underground utilities in new developments, including new line extensions and major improvements to existing lines, and provide screening and buffering of existing aboveground utilities and encourage their placement below ground.

Commercial and Industrial Land Use Standards

1. Locate proposed commercial and industrial developments adjacent to compatible use (public or other similar uses, etc.) as opposed to residential or other sensitive areas. Where a commercial or industrial development desires a location near a sensitive area, the site should be designed so that transitional uses such as offices and/or buffers are located between conflicting uses.
2. Industrial and commercial areas should be planned and located to avoid traffic through residential and agricultural areas except in special circumstances where residential and nonresidential areas are both part of an overall master plan and special measures are taken to ensure the residential or agricultural uses are adequately protected. Industrial uses to be located on Rural Lands may be permitted more than one-half mile from such transportation facilities where such a location is essential to the use (i.e., resource related such as a borrow pit) and direct access to an adequate public road is provided.
3. Mitigate objectionable aspects of commercial or industrial uses through a combination approach including performance standards, buffering and special setback regulations.
4. Provide landscaped areas and trees along public roads and property lines and develop sites in a manner that retains or enhances the natural, wooded character of the City.

Residential Land Use Standards

1. Ensure that gross housing densities are compatible with the local environment, the scale and capacities of public services, facilities and utilities available or planned, and the character of development in the vicinity. Net densities should be significantly higher than gross densities and minimum open space significantly increased when feasible. Ensure that residential developments provide usable open space and protect the City's natural wooded character and resources. When evaluating development proposals, permit higher gross densities based on the degree to which a proposed development achieves the goals, objectives, strategies and standards of the Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on affordable housing; provisions of



open space; protection of the environment; natural features; adjoining land uses; and capacities of public facilities and services and the ability to meet the public needs of the development.

2. Design residential developments in a manner that fosters a sense of place and community and avoids the image of continuous suburban sprawl.
3. Preserve sensitive areas as open space, maintain trees and vegetation. Consider siting for solar orientation, and design residential development to preserve the character of its natural setting in order to provide a more workable, efficient, and pleasant living environment.
4. Base all design on a rational use of land reflecting topographic and other physical features and natural boundaries of the site rather than imposing a rectilinear layout intended solely to satisfy minimum ordinance requirements.
5. Vary building orientation and setback, façade treatment, and lot size to avoid repetitiveness in larger developments.
6. Prohibit direct access to arterial and collector streets from individual single-family detached units and two-family units. Locate residential developments on internal roads as both an aesthetic and traffic safety measure.
7. Encourage off-street parking areas for multi-family residential developments thereby minimizing conflicting turning movements with on-site and off-site traffic circulation.
8. Locate planned moderate density residential uses near non-residential uses, major roads, agricultural and forestal uses, and other conflicting uses only where the conflicts between such uses can be adequately addressed.
9. Emphasize the use of natural screening/buffering over artificial or planted screening/buffering. Use of natural site features (vegetation, topography, etc.) should be given highest priority when providing screening and buffering.

Architectural Control Guidelines

In 1996 the General Assembly of Virginia approved special enabling legislation allowing the City of Poquoson to amend its Charter for the purpose of establishing architectural control regulations. One of the main reasons for developing architectural control regulations is the demand for such regulations by citizens. ~~As you may recall, citizens~~ Citizens who attended the Comprehensive Plan Update Process public input session this past Spring felt that the City should have some degree of control over the appearance of the structures that are built within the



City's commercial districts in order to preserve the unique, small town atmosphere of Poquoson and protect it from the garish clutter of the commercial districts of some of its neighboring jurisdictions. Broad support for such regulation was also found within the responses to the Citizen Opinion survey conducted this summer. Without architectural control regulations, the City has no control over the architectural style, color, building material, scale, alignment or dimension of a structure. While some might believe that it is a property owner's "right" to build whatever type of structure they desire on their property, it is easy to see how such unbridled individuality would adversely impact surrounding property values by eroding the aesthetic quality of surrounding properties. While architectural controls cannot be counted on to guarantee that every commercial development will meet the aesthetic standards of all citizens, they can be a very important tool to encourage developers of commercial property to consider the effect the appearance of their development will have upon surrounding properties and to build aesthetically-pleasing structures which blend into the surrounding environment and promote the relaxing, visual appeal of the City of Poquoson. The visual attractiveness of a commercial district is critical to the success of each and every business endeavor, which will locate in the district. Consequently, the City should attempt to promote responsible development, which will not denigrate the district's appeal as a whole. With the above noted comments in mind, the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to create architectural review guidelines.

Property Maintenance Code

In 1998 a citizen-input survey was conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan development process. Over 70% of the respondents to the survey indicated that they wanted some type of building maintenance code. The Building Official's Office reports that it receives a minimum of 10 complaints each week regarding improperly maintained properties, unsafe buildings, and rubbish collection. Some of these homes are not only dangerous to its inhabitants but also to surrounding properties should these homes catch on fire. In addition, poorly maintained properties adversely impact the property values of surrounding homes. Because the City does not currently have a property maintenance code we are unable to respond to these complaints, safeguard surrounding land uses from properties that are potential long term fire hazards, and prevent the devaluation of properties located near inadequately maintained properties. The creation of a property maintenance code would allow the City to establish minimum property and building maintenance standards to ensure the general health, safety and welfare of all existing buildings and premises. The Code would allow the Building Official to inspect buildings that are in such disrepair that they pose a threat to its inhabitants and surrounding property owners. Enforcement of the Code would also protect the aesthetic character of the community, strengthen the pride of home ownership, and generally protect and enhance property values throughout the City. As noted in the Housing Element, the creation of a property maintenance code would also allow City residents to participate in state funded home



improvement programs, wherein the state provides grant money and low interest loans to property owners who might not otherwise be able to afford needed home improvements.

Entrance Areas and Corridors

These areas and corridors are important for historical and aesthetic reasons. Entrance corridors serve as a visual demarcation of political jurisdictions, establish the character and visual attractiveness of the City for visitors, and generally indicate a locality's commitment to aesthetics and overall good design. There are three entrance corridors leading into the City: Victory Boulevard, Yorktown Road to Poquoson Avenue and Wythe Creek Road to the Hampton Corporate Limits as shown on Exhibit. Design features such as signs, location of parking areas, landscaping and open space affect the visual quality of entrance areas and corridors. During the public input sessions, citizens generally favored sign controls, enhanced landscaping and the preservation of wooded areas. A variety of informal and formal measures are available to address the needs of these corridors. Informal methods range from the Virginia Adopt-A-Highway program to neighborhood cleanup drives and entrance area landscaping. Overlay districts implemented through the Zoning Ordinance are another more formal method.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Goals

1. Promote an orderly and planned rate of growth that is designed to retain Poquoson's small town character while accommodating quality development.
2. Achieve a pattern of land use and development that reinforces and improves the quality of life for the citizens and assists in achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan in Economics, Environment, Housing, Utilities, Transportation and Recreation.
3. Direct growth as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.
4. Develop increased staff awareness of all environmental ordinances and guidelines.
5. Develop guidelines for waterfront development. The guidelines should be in conformance with CBLAD Regulations for water dependent activities and protect, while allowing, appropriate development.
6. Work environmentally to relieve State condemnation of all estuaries of Poquoson within three (3) years.



Objectives

1. Provide adequate land areas for the safe, orderly, and efficient economic and population growth of the area.
2. Provide for a stable, unified, attractive commercial district that meets the needs of the City.
3. Encourage quality commercial/light industrial development that blends in with the community.
4. Provide regulations that enhance the maintenance of residential and commercial properties throughout the City.
5. Promote the use of land in a manner harmonious with other uses and the environment.
6. Promote the use of land consistent with the capacity of existing and planned public facilities and services and the City's ability to provide such facilities and services.
7. Prepare waterfront district regulations, along with shoreline protection guidelines, for both commercial and residential properties that border wetlands and/or tidal waters.
8. Formalize the Stormwater Management Plan for the Big Woods and existing drainage systems in accordance with State model regulations.
9. Formalize FEMA Floodplain Management Regulations.
10. Provide public sewer facilities in areas of the City that are in need of such services because of water quality impacts.

Strategies

1. Outline land areas in the Comprehensive Plan Map best suited to accommodate projected needs for residential, commercial, industrial, and public and semi-public activities.
2. Do not rezone land for uses not recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Maintain adequate subdivision and zoning regulations designed to prevent fragmented, inharmonious, and disorderly development.



4. Require developers to locate new developments where public water and sewers are presently available or require them to provide public water and public sewer consistent with the Master Sewer Plan.
5. Encourage all future commercial development to be located in the vicinity of the Big Woods and along Wythe Creek Road within close proximity to Victory Boulevard.
6. Discourage strip commercial development and minimize conflicts between residential and commercial uses by requiring the establishment of buffer areas, the size of which is based on the intensity of the commercial use.
7. Provide a unified appearance and safe design for businesses along Wythe Creek Road, with particular emphasis on access, signs, landscaping, green areas and appropriate architecture.
8. Encourage a variety of commercial uses, which will expand and stabilize the City tax base.
9. Maintain the current minimum lot sizes for the City's three single-family residential zoning districts.
10. Maintain the size and area of coverage of the City's four residential zoning districts.
11. If alternative development types are permitted, their frequency and density levels should not be allowed to the extent that it overburdens the infrastructure capacity or adversely impacts the character of surrounding neighborhoods.
12. Encourage commercial/industrial development in the "Big Woods" area in strict compliance with the Big Woods Zoning Districts: General Commercial, Village Commercial and Research and Development.
13. Prohibit the approval of uses in the Big Woods that are not specifically permitted by right according to the applicable zoning district.
14. Require that proposed light industrial uses minimize or eliminate air and water pollution, dust, odor and noise, which may be detrimental to other nearby land uses and the overall character of the City.
15. Adopt a property maintenance code that would allow the City to establish minimum property and building maintenance standards to ensure the general health, safety and welfare of all existing buildings and premises.



16. Adopt architectural control guidelines and appoint an Architectural Review Board to preserve the unique, small town atmosphere of Poquoson and protect it from the garish clutter of the commercial districts of some of its neighboring jurisdictions.
17. Enhance the development opportunities of the City's waterfront properties through the creation of one or more waterfront commercial districts along White House Cove and at Messick Point.
18. Revise the subdivision ordinance to encourage the preservation of open space and wooded areas.
19. Encourage public and private coordination of efforts and activities, which shape land development in an effort to lower the cost of development and promote sufficient land use.
20. Protect and enhance the wooded character of the Big Woods.
21. Require sufficient documentation to determine the impacts of a proposed development including, but not limited to, studies of traffic impact, water quality and quantity, and fiscal impact. Require that the recommendations of such studies be adequately addressed prior to preparation of development plans, or in instances where a rezoning or conditional use permit is required as part of those applications.
22. Revise the Sign Ordinance where possible to provide stricter regulations concerning on-site lighting of commercial development.
- ~~23. Revise the Site Plan Ordinance where possible to provide stricter regulations concerning on-site lighting of commercial developments.~~
23. Identify and prioritize areas in the City that are in need of public sewer facilities.
24. Enforce RPA, wetlands regulations, and stormwater regulations for all waterfront commercial properties.
25. Recognizing the importance and ecological sensitivity of Poquoson's land, developments will require either a Minor or Major WQIA. No provision for administrative waivers from this requirement provided.
26. Provide technically trained staff (i.e., certified E&S plans examiner, certified E&S inspectors) to review plans, inspect sites and enforce the policy of the City when and where the need arises.

27. Relief waiver or exception for encroachment into the RPA from Requirements of Chesapeake Bay Regulations to be granted by Environmental Development Review Committee. Those cases involving waivers and applications shall go to the Board of Zoning Appeals in the event of the request of an exception.
28. Require that development plans identify environmental elements to be impacted and what necessary mitigation measures will be needed.
29. Prepare a revised Subdivision Ordinance for adoption to include soils, stormwater, and open space impact statements.
30. Implement special development regulations to protect natural resource areas, including low-lying areas, tidal and nontidal wetlands, CBPAs, areas identified by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, as well as areas containing hydric or shrink-swell soils.
31. Prepare a State Stormwater Regulation Performance and Criteria Manual for Adoption.
32. Prepare the Zoning Ordinance to reflect larger lot sizes and open space regulations.
33. Require either a major or minor Water Quality Impact Assessment for all development in Poquoson.
34. Require increased minimum waterfront lot size for newly subdivided lots to $\frac{3}{4}$ acre minimum size.

